



January 30, 2007

Celona, Urciuoli, Driscoll are sentenced in corruption probe

A federal judge today sentenced **Robert A. Urciuoli** to 36 months in prison, and codefendant **Frances P. Driscoll** to eight months, plus eight months home confinement, for illegally hiring State Senator **John Celona** to advance the political agenda of Roger Williams Medical Center. Celona was also sentenced, to 30 months in prison, for illegally using his office to benefit Roger Williams and other entities.

United States Attorney Robert Clark Corrente announced the sentences, which Senior U.S. District Court Judge Ernest C. Torres imposed in U.S. District Court, Providence. Judge Torres also fined Urciuoli \$20,000 and Driscoll \$10,000.

"The sentences imposed today represent another chapter in a broad investigation into corruption surrounding the State House," U.S. Attorney Corrente said. "Our office, along with the FBI, the State Police, and other agencies, has devoted an unprecedented amount of resources to an investigation that is pursuing many angles. Our mission is to root out the corruption that has existed, and level the playing field for all who do business with our government."

Celona has been cooperating with the government in its continuing investigation into the relationships between corporations and the General Assembly. He pleaded guilty in August 2005 to mail fraud, admitting that he accepted money and gifts from corporations that had interests in legislation pending before the General Assembly, and that he used his position to fraudulently advance the interests of those corporations.

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In October, a jury convicted Urciuoli and Driscoll of using the mail to fraudulently deprive Rhode Island citizens of Celona's honest services. At the time of the offenses, Urciuoli was President of Roger Williams; Driscoll was, until 2000, its Vice President for Public Relations.

During the trial, Assistant U.S. Attorneys Luis M. Matos and Dulce Donovan presented evidence that Urciuoli hired Celona in 1998, ostensibly to work for the Village at Elmhurst, an assisted living center affiliated with Roger Williams. However, the evidence showed that Urciuoli actually hired Celona to advance the Medical Center's political agenda. The evidence also showed that Driscoll regularly sent Celona instructions on how to advance or deter legislation that affected the Medical Center.

Between 1998 and 2004, Roger Williams paid Celona approximately \$260,000 in consultant fees and, in return, Celona took steps to kill bills deemed harmful to Roger Williams and to advance legislation that Urciuoli and Driscoll considered favorable.

Judge Torres ordered Urciuoli and Driscoll to report to prison on April 2, and Celona to report on March 2.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Rhode Island State Police conducted the investigation. The continuing corruption investigation also involves the U.S. Department of Labor and the criminal investigation arm of the Internal Revenue Service.

In addition to Assistant U.S. Attorneys Matos and Donovan, Assistant U.S. Attorney Gerard B. Sullivan is prosecuting the cases that result from the investigation.